

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 068561
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 PA-02 SSM-05
SAB-02 ARA-14 /070 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:Y
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
S/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

-----028869 171727Z /41

O 170107Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 068561

USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN
DOD WASHDC
JCS WASHDC
:CIA
USIA WASHDC
NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS STATE 068561

CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 16

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 16,
1978. FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

MR. CARTER: NOW, ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
AND IN SOUTHERN LEBANON IN PARTICULAR. I DISLIKE DIS-
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 068561

APPOINTING A LOT OF YOU, BUT AT THIS POINT I AM NOT
GOING TO BE MUCH BETTER OFF THAN THAT TAPE RECORDER.
AND WHAT I CAN PROMISE YOU IS THAT LATE THIS AFTERNOON,
PROBABLY AT 5 OR 5:30, I SHOULD BE ABLE BOTH TO GIVE A
FULL STATEMENT AND ANSWER QUESTIONS, AND I WILL DO SO
FORMALLY, BECAUSE SIMPLY POSTING A STATEMENT, I THINK,
WOULD BE MORE TROUBLE THAN IT IS WORTH TO ME OR YOU.

WE ARE IN VERY INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS HERE IN WASHINGTON,
IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND IN NEW YORK. WE HAVE HAD INTEN-
SIVE EXCHANGES YESTERDAY AND THEY ARE CONTINUING IN
JERUSALEM AND BEIRUT AND OTHER POINTS, AS WELL.

AS YOU KNOW, AMBASSADOR PARKER HAS MET WITH THE PRESIDENT
AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF LEBANON. AMBASSADOR DINITZ
REPORTED TO PRESIDENT CARTER, AND SECRETARY VANCE,
THROUGH ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON, ON THE MILITARY
SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, AND ON ISRAEL'S POSITION
ON WITHDRAWAL.

OUR CHARGE IN TEL AVIV HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH PRIME
MINISTER BEGIN, AND WE HAVE BEEN TALKING TO A NUMBER
OF MEMBERS, AND THEY AMONG THEMSELVES, OF THE UN SECURITY
COUNCIL.

THERE HAVE BEEN, OF COURSE, CONTINUING STATEMENTS FROM A
NUMBER OF QUARTERS ON THE SUBJECT, AND WE FRANKLY WANT

TO CONTINUE AT SOME LENGTH THE CONSULTATIONS WE HAVE GOING BEFORE GOING ANY FURTHER WITH WHAT I KNOW IS A WIDE-RANGING SET OF QUESTIONS.

I AM THEREFORE NOT ABLE AT THIS POINT, THOUGH I HOPED TO BE, TO ADVANCE MUCH FURTHER BEYOND WHERE I WAS DURING THE BRIEFING YESTERDAY.

Q. DO YOU HOPE TO BE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE SOME ACTION OR
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 068561

DECISION?

A. I WOULD HOPE THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO DISCUSS MORE FULLY HOW WE VIEW THE SITUATION AND WHAT WE VIEW AS THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER ACTION.

Q. IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT GOING TO BE THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF INFORMATION NOW, OR IS THE WHITE HOUSE GOING TO PUT SOMETHING OUT ALSO?

A. I BELIEVE THAT WE WILL BE HANDLING IT HERE.

Q. THE WHITE HOUSE WILL NOT BE MAKING SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS?

A. THEY MAY MAKE SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS, BUT I THINK THAT THE OPENING VOLLEY WILL COME FROM HERE.

Q. YESTERDAY YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T KNOW, DIDN'T HAVE CONFIRMATION OF ANY ATTACKS INVOLVING REFUGEE CAMPS OR CIVILIANS. PRESUMABLY TODAY YOU DO. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS SPECIFICALLY ON THAT SIDE OF THE BATTLE?

A. LET ME JUST SIMPLY SAY THAT WE HAVE SAID BEFORE, AND SAY AGAIN, THAT WE OBVIOUSLY REGRET THE LOSS OF INNOCENT LIVES WHEREVER THEY MAY OCCUR, AND THAT THIS OBVIOUSLY APPLIES TO THOSE REPORTS WHICH WE HAVE RECEIVED OF THE DEATHS OF CIVILIANS.

Q. HAVE YOU BROUGHT IT UP WITH THE ISRAELIS? FOR EXAMPLE, DID MR. ATHERTON BRING IT UP WITH THE AMBASSADOR YESTERDAY?

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 068561

A. I DON'T THINK IT WAS RAISED AS A SET PEACE POINT. I AM CONFIDENT IN THE DISCUSSION OF THE MILITARY SITUATION THAT DISCUSSION ON HOW AND WHERE SOME EVENTS MAY HAVE TAKEN PLACE OCCURRED.

Q. THE SAME PROBLEM ARISES THAT AROSE THE OTHER DAY. NOW YOU ARE SAYING YOU REGRET THE LOSS OF INNOCENT LIVES. YOU ARE LEAVING OPEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT GUERRILLAS WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN TERRORISM OR INVOLVED IN TERRORIST ACTIONS DON'T GET ANY SYMPATHY FROM US IF THEY GET KILLED. WE SHOULDN'T KILL INNOCENT PEOPLE. WE DON'T BELIEVE THAT KILLING IN ITSELF IS BAD. CAN YOU CLARIFY THIS POSITION?

A. NOT PARTICULARLY, BUT I CAN SIMPLY REPEAT WHAT WE HAVE SAID ABOUT OUR OWN UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISRAELI POSITION ON THIS. AND I THINK THAT WHAT I HAVE SAID IN VARIOUS MODES ON MONDAY AND AGAIN YESTERDAY STILL STANDS.

Q. BY REMAINING SILENT ON THE LOSS OF 200 LEBANESE LIVES IN THIS RAID RIGHT NOW, WOULDN'T YOU BE REALLY IMPLYING THAT LEBANON WAS HELD RESPONSIBLE IN REGARD TO THE PALESTINIAN ATTACK?

A. NO. I WOULD NOTE FOR THE RECORD, OF COURSE, THE CLEAR STATEMENT BY THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT THAT THEY WERE NOT RESPONSIBLE AND COULD NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE.

Q. IS THE FOCUS OF AMERICAN ACTIVITY NOW TO COME UP WITH A FORCE PERHAPS UNDER UN AUSPICES THAT COULD BE QUICKLY MOVED INTO THE AREA OF SOUTHERN LEBANON THAT WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE ISRAELIS TO LEAVE?

A. THE FOCUS OF OUR EFFORTS RIGHT NOW IS TO DETERMINE WHAT WOULD BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY FOR US TO BRING AN END TO THE FIGHTING, TO GUARANTEE AND PRESERVE THE UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 068561

INTEGRITY AND STABILITY OF LEBANON, AND TO DEAL WITH THE LEGITIMATE DEFENSE FEARS AND REQUIREMENTS OF ISRAEL. BUT WHAT FORM THAT WILL TAKE, THE REASON I AM NOT PREPARED TO SAY SOMETHING RIGHT NOW IS THAT WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO SIMPLY OFFER A FORMULA UNTIL WE COMPLETE A NUMBER OF THE CONSULTATIONS THAT WE HAVE.

Q. IS THERE A HOPE OR A DESIRE HERE THAT SOMETHING COULD BE WORKED OUT VIS-A-VIS THE ISRAELI TROOPS IN LEBANON PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL HERE OF PRIME MINISTER BEGIN?

A. LET ME SAY SOMETHING GENERALLY ABOUT THAT QUESTION. OUR EFFORTS TO HELP EVERYONE COME TO A SOLUTION IN THIS AREA IS NOT TIED IN ANY WAY TO THE VISIT NEXT WEEK OF PRIME MINISTER BEGIN. THAT IS A WAY OF BACKING INTO SAYING THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO FIND SOME FORMULA, SOME APPROACH, AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, AND IT IS NOT GOING TO

BE POSTPONED. OUR EFFORTS WILL NOT BE POSTPONED TO WAIT FOR THAT, FOR THAT EVENT.

Q. YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOMETHING HAPPEN THEN PRIOR TO HIS VISIT?

A. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOMETHING HAPPEN AS QUICK AS WE CAN. BUT THE SOMETHING, OF COURSE, IS ONE OF THE THINGS THAT WE HAVE TO BE WORKING ON, WE ARE WORKING ON.

Q. YOU HAVE BEEN SPEAKING OF RESTRAINT ALL ALONG, SPEAKING IN RESTRAINING TERMS. IS THE UNITED STATES STILL INTERESTED IN RESTRAINT? I ASK BECAUSE PRESIDENT SADAT HAS MADE A STATEMENT THAT -- HE DOESN'T REALLY SAY WHAT EGYPT IS PLANNING TO DO, BUT HE CONDEMNED THE UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 068561

ATTACK AND SAID HE WAS WATCHING THE SITUATION VERY CLOSELY TO MAKE OUR PLAN AND THAT HIS NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WILL BE RECONVENING. IS IT STILL THE U.S. HOPE THAT SYRIA, EGYPT, ALL THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES KIND OF KEEP THINGS COOL?

A. ABSOLUTELY.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY DIRECT COMMENT ON WHAT PRESIDENT SADAT SAID?

A. I DON'T HAVE MUCH OF A COMMENT ON THAT. OUR GENERAL COMMENT IS THAT WE, ONE, WANT TO ENCOURAGE THE PARTIES AND HELP THE PARTIES FIND A SOLUTION TO THE SPECIFIC SET OF EVENTS, BECAUSE WE ARE DEEPLY COMMITTED TO THE RESOLUTION OF THAT BROADER SET OF ISSUES WHICH ARE INVOLVED IN A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE SETTLEMENT. AND THEREFORE THE QUICKER WE CAN RESOLVE THIS MATTER, THE MORE QUICKLY WE CAN REFOCUS OUR ATTENTION AND EVERYONE'S ATTENTION ON A SEARCH FOR AN OVER-ALL PEACE.

Q. WOULD YOU REGARD IT AS UNLIKELY THAT THE DIRECT TALKS BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL COULD PROCEED AS LONG AS THE ISRAELI TROOPS ARE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON.

A. I COULDN'T SPECULATE ON THAT. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. IN VIEW OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE CONSENSUS WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION THAT THE EVENTS OF RECENT DAYS HAVE COMPLICATED THE MEETINGS BETWEEN MR. CARTER AND MR. BEGIN NEXT WEEK, AND THEREFORE PROBABLY NOTHING CONCRETE CAN RESULT, HAVE ANY THOUGHTS BEEN GIVEN TO POSTPONING THE BEGIN VISIT?

A. LET ME START WITH THE PREMISE, WHICH I DON'T ACCEPT.

THERE IS A WIDESPREAD BELIEF THAT THE MEETINGS CAN BE
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 STATE 068561

USEFUL AND FRUITFUL, AND WE CERTAINLY INTEND TO FOCUS
AS MUCH OF OUR EFFORT AS POSSIBLE IN THOSE MEETINGS
ON DISCUSSING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER THE BASIC QUESTIONS
OF AN OVER-ALL PEACE SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

TO ANSWER THE SPECIFIC WHICH ARISES FROM YOUR PREMISE,
THERE IS NEITHER ANY INTENTION NOR ANY PLAN NOR ANY
DESIRE TO POSTPONE THAT MEETING AT THIS TIME.

Q. WHEN YOU SAY FRUITFUL, IN WHAT WAY DO YOU THINK THEY
MIGHT BE FRUITFUL IN THIS ATMOSPHERE?

A. THAT WAS SORT OF THE QUESTION THAT WAS ASKED BEFORE
THIS ATMOSPHERE. I MEAN, WHAT WE HOPE IS THAT IN
TALKING TOGETHER ABOUT THE ISSUES WHICH ARE OUTSTANDING,
WE CAN FIND SOME RESOLUTION OF THE DIFFERENCES WHICH
OBVIOUSLY ARE STILL THERE.

NOW, IT IS ON THE PREMISE ALWAYS THAT IT IS MORE USEFUL
TO KEEP TALKING WITH AND ABOUT PROBLEMS THAN IT IS TO PUT
THEM ASIDE AND WALK OFF AND NOT TALK ABOUT THEM. AND
THEREFORE WE THINK IT CAN BE.

Q. HAVE YOU HAD ANY INFORMATION FROM THE ISRAELIS WITH
WHOM THEY WOULD LIKE TO REACH AN AGREEMENT TO WITHDRAW
THEIR TROOPS FROM LEBANON?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GET MUCH MORE SPECIFIC
THAN THE ISRAELIS' SPOKESMAN WAS PUBLICLY ON THAT.

Q. THEY DID NOT SPECIFY ANYTHING.

A. I THINK YOU WILL HAVE TO ASK THE ISRAELIS ABOUT
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 09 STATE 068561

THAT.

Q. I JUST CAME FROM THE WHITE HOUSE AND THEY ANNOUNCED
THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE A COMMENT THIS

AFTERNOON. AND THIS WAS MET WITH SEVERAL ANGUISHED
CRIES WITH SUCH CHARGES AS "WISHY-WASHY", AND THE BUCK
IS BEING PASSED AND THE BUCK IS RUNNING ALL OVER TOWN.

THE QUESTION RAISED THERE IS: IS THIS GOING TO BE THE
PROCEDURE OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WHEN THERE ARE
THESE INTERNATIONAL CRISES THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT

WILL SPEAK TO THEM INVARIABLY NOW? COULD YOU GIVE US A LITTLE BACKGROUND AS TO WHY IT IS DOWN TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT?

A. I HAVE GONE THROUGH THIS. BUT INsofar AS WHY, BECAUSE THIS SEEMED TO BE THE LOGICAL PLACE SINCE THIS HAS BEEN THE FOCUS OF MOST OF THE DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

Q. I'M CONFUSED ABOUT YOUR STATEMENT HERE THAT THERE'S NOT ANY INTENTION TO POSTPONE THE MEETING WITH BEGIN AT THIS TIME AND THEN YOUR NEXT STATEMENT THAT WHAT WE HOPE IS THAT BY TALKING TOGETHER WE CAN FIND SOME RESOLUTION. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS THAT IF YOU AREN'T ABLE TO FIND SOME RESOLUTION THAT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO POSTPONE THE TRIP.

A. NO, NO; I'M SORRY. THE JUXTAPOSITION DOESN'T FOLLOW. I'M TELLING YOU THAT THERE'S NO INTENTION AT THIS TIME FOR THE MEETING NOT TO GO FORWARD.

SECOND, THE JUXTAPOSITION HAD TO DO ONLY WITH THE DISCUSSIONS WE'LL HAVE WHEN HE GETS HERE.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 10 STATE 068561

Q. THE VISIT IS NOT DEPENDENT ON YOUR REACHING AGREEMENT WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN ON ANY PROCEDURES.

A. NO, AND NO DEPENDENCY HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED LIKE THAT. YOU MEAN PROCEDURES FOR WHAT?

Q. FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS OR REPLACEMENT OF THE TROOPS.

A. NO. ALL I'M TELLING YOU IS THAT AT THIS POINT ALL PLANNING IS "GO."

Q. IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THE LEBANESE ARMY SHOULD PLAY A ROLE, I WONDER IF YOU COULD GIVE US SOME NOTION OF HOW BIG THE LEBANESE ARMY IS AND WHAT KIND OF STUFF WE HAVE IN THE PIPELINE TO THEM AND WHAT KIND OF LEGAL PROCEDURES WE HAVE TO GO

THROUGH TO REINFORCE THEM -- IF WE'RE GOING TO REINFORCE THEM.

A. YES. I'M JUST LOOKING AT THE RESIDENT EXPERT, AND HE DOESN'T HAVE THE FIGURES AT HIS TIP. THEREFORE, I'LL TAKE THOSE QUESTIONS. I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWERS. GEORGE, CAN WE GET THAT THIS AFTERNOON FOR HIM SO THAT IT SPELLS OUT THE DETAILS?

MR. SHERMAN: YES.

Q. YESTERDAY YOU THOUGHT THE LONG-RANGE SOLUTION TO THE TERRORIST PROBLEM IS AN EXTENSION OF THE LEBANESE ARMY. YOU WERE ASKED BEFORE ABOUT UN FORCES. ARE WE LOOKING LONG RANGE AND SHORT RANGE, AND HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 11 STATE 068561

MIND ABOUT THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION BE A STRONG LEBANESE ARMY?

MR. CARTER: NO.

Q. SO IF WE COME UP WITH A UN PLAN IT WOULD BE -- WHAT -- AN INTERIM PLAN?

A. LET ME JUST SAY THAT OUR ULTIMATE AIM REMAINS UNCHANGED -- WHICH IS THE FULL EXTENSION OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY OF THAT NATION.

Q. THROUGH THE INSTRUMENT OF THE ARMY.

A. THROUGH THE ARMY, YES, AND THAT DOESN'T CHANGE. NOW, WHATEVER WE MAY COME UP WITH, WHATEVER OTHER NATIONS MAY COME UP -- WHATEVER IS EFFECTED -- THAT WOULD BE THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF OUR POLICY, AND THAT HAS NOT CHANGED.

Q. GOING BACK, YOU SAID INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS ARE GOING ON HERE AND THE MIDDLE EAST AND NEW YORK. THE DISCUSSIONS IN NEW YORK, I PRESUME, ARE WITH UN OFFICIALS?

A. YES. WITH MEMBERS OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL, WITH UN OFFICIALS, AND AS I UNDERSTAND IT BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AND NOT JUST US.

Q. HAVE YOU DISCUSSED IT ENOUGH TO HAVE ANY IDEA OF WHAT THE SOVIETS WOULD THINK OF SOME SORT OF A UNITED NATIONS POLICY?

A. I AM NOT ABLE TO DEAL WITH THAT. I DON'T HAVE ANY IMMEDIATE READING ON IT. THE SECRETARY IS HAVING LUNCH

WITH THE AMBASSADOR. YOU MIGHT CHECK WITH THEIR MISSION UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 12 STATE 068561

IN THE UN.

IN THE MEANTIME, IT MAY BE THAT I'LL HAVE SOME FIX ON

IT; AND SINCE I'M GOING TO BE OUT HERE EXPOSING MYSELF THIS AFTERNOON AGAIN, I'M SURE THAT YOU CAN PUT IT TO ME THEN.

Q. THERE ARE SOME UN OBSERVERS IN THAT AREA NOW, RIGHT?

MR. SHERMAN: THERE ARE 48 MEMBERS THERE OF THE LEBANESE-ISRAELI MIXED ARMISTICE COMMISSION.

Q. WHAT NATIONALITY AGAIN?

MR. SHERMAN: NINE OF THEM ARE AMERICANS AND THE OTHERS COME FROM VARIOUS NATIONALITIES, SUCH AS CANADIANS.

I COULD GET YOU A LIST OF THE OTHERS.

Q. DO THEY CARRY ARMS, GEORGE -- SIDE ARMS?

MR. SHERMAN: NO. I DON'T THINK SO.

Q. WHERE ARE THEY SPECIFICALLY?

MR. SHERMAN: THEY'RE IN THAT REGION.

Q. SOUTHERN LEBANON?

MR. SHERMAN: SOUTHERN LEBANON.

Q. HODDING, COULD YOU CLARIFY EXACTLY WHAT ROLE WE ENVISAGE THE SECURITY COUNCIL PLAYING IN THIS? WHY ARE UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 13 STATE 068561

WE CONSULTING WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

A. BECAUSE A POSSIBILITY FOR ACTION COULD LIE WITH CERTAIN STEPS THE SECURITY COUNCIL MIGHT TAKE. I MEAN AS ALWAYS WHEN THERE IS A MATTER WHICH INVOLVES A BREAK IN PEACE.

Q. DOES THIS INDICATE AN AMERICAN INTENTION TO BRING THE SECURITY COUNCIL INTO IT?

A. WHAT IT REALLY INVOLVES IS AN AMERICAN INTENTION TO EXPLORE ALL THE POSSIBLE AVENUES FOR BRINGING A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION TO THIS SITUATION, AND THAT OBVIOUSLY IS ALWAYS ONE THAT IS A POSSIBILITY AND THAT'S WHAT

WE'RE EXPLORING.

Q. DOES THE UNITED STATES SEE ITSELF AS THE CATALYST IN BRINGING ABOUT THIS REPLACEMENT FORCE FOR THE ISRAELIS,

OR WOULD THE UNITED STATES LIKE TO SEE THE UN TAKE OVER THAT ROLE?

LET ME REPHRASE IT SOMEWHAT. IS THE UNITED STATES JUST GOING TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL AS ONE OF A SERIES OF OPTIONS THAT THE UNITED STATES IS EXPLORING, OR IS THE UNITED STATES GOING TO THE UN IN EFFECT TO SAY: "HERE, TAKE THIS. TAKE THIS BURDEN FROM OUR SHOULDERS"?

A. A GOOD QUESTION. MY ANSWER, HOWEVER, HAS TO BE THAT THE PRECISE ROUTE WE GO IS DEPENDING HEAVILY ON THE CONSULTATIONS WE'RE HAVING; AND THERE IS HARDLY ANY POINT, LET US SAY, IN US TAKING AVENUE A IF 10 OUT OF 15 PEOPLE SAYS THAT'S JUST OUT OF THE QUESTION. SO WE ARE TALKING ABOUT IT.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 14 STATE 068561

Q. IS THE FIRST AMERICAN PREFERENCE THAT THE UNITED NATIONS TAKE OVER THIS ROLE, OR IS IT SIMPLY ONE OF A NUMBER OF OPTIONS THAT WE'RE CONSIDERING?

A. THE REASON I'M NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH THAT IS BECAUSE I'M GOING TO HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT LATER IN THE DAY. I BELIEVE RIGHT NOW OUR PREFERENCE IS THAT THERE BE AS SPEEDY A SOLUTION TO THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON AS POSSIBLE, AND WHAT WAY IT GOES I'LL BE ABLE TO SAY MORE ACCURATELY LATER ON.

Q. LAST NIGHT YOU ISSUED A BRIEF STATEMENT SAYING WE ARE CONSULTING WITH THE ISRAELIS ABOUT WITHDRAWAL. YOU HAVEN'T ACTUALLY REPEATED THAT STATEMENT IN TODAY'S REMARKS.

A. WE CERTAINLY HAVE TALKED TO THEM ABOUT IT.

A. WELL, YOU'VE BROADENED IT TO SAY WE WANT A SPEEDY SOLUTION TO THE SHOLE PROBLEM RATHER THAN -- YOU'VE SORT OF BROADENED THE DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM FROM SIMPLY ONE OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO --

A. PEOPLE ALWAYS RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ARE TWO ASPECTS TO IT.

Q. WHAT'S THE OTHER ASPECT?

A. THE OTHER ASPECT IS ALWAYS THEIR CONTINUING SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, THEIR FEARS, AND WHAT HAVE YOU.

Q. YESTERDAY YOU SPOKE ONLY OF WITHDRAWAL.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 15 STATE 068561

A. NO. THE REASON FOR THE STATEMENT LAST NIGHT WAS, THE NEW INGREDIENT WAS OVER WHAT I SAID EARLIER IN THE DAY, THE QUESTION OF --

Q. IT JUST SO HAPPENED IT WAS BEING HELD UP AGAINST DINITZ SAYING WE'RE TRYING TO MAKE THE AREA TERRORIST-FREE AND HERE THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS SPEAKING ABOUT WITHDRAWAL. YOU'RE INTERESTED IN WHAT -- MAKING THE AREA TERRORIST-FREE?

A. WE'RE INTERESTED IN THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE NATION OF LEBANON IN THE AREA AND A PEACEFUL SITUATION BETWEEN THE NATIONS THERE AND EXPLICITLY, OBVIOUSLY, BETWEEN THOSE WHO ARE IN LEBANON AND THOSE WHO ARE IN ISRAEL; AND WE WANT A SOLUTION WHICH WILL HELP TO GUARANTEE THAT.

Q. THE UNITED STATES HAS SPENT A LOT OF MONEY OR GIVEN LEBANON A LOT OF MONEY TO REBUILD ITS ARMY. WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THAT OPERATION?

A. I THOUGHT IN EFFECT THAT'S WHAT I'VE TAKEN -- HOW MUCH MONEY IS IN THE PIPELINE, HOW MUCH STUFF HAS GONE, HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE IN THE ARMY, HOW MANY UNITS DO THEY ACTUALLY NOW HAVE TRAINED -- ALL THAT SORT OF THING.

MR. SHERMAN: THE FIGURES ARE THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS PROPOSING TO SPEND A HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS OVER THREE YEARS AND THAT THE FIRST 25 MILLION DOLLARS HAS GONE AND THE 50 MILLION DOLLARS WAS PUT FORWARD TO THE CONGRESS IN A PROPOSAL THIS PAST JANUARY.

Q. IT HAS NOT BEEN ACTED ON?

MR. SHERMAN: SO FAR AS I KNOW, NO.

Q. I WAS WONDERING IF YOU COULD POSSIBLY EXPLAIN WHY UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 16 STATE 068561

THIS VERY IMPORTANT STATEMENT IS, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, SCHEDULED AT 4:15 THIS AFTERNOON?

A. I SAID ROUGHLY 5:00 TO 5:30 THAT I'LL BE POSTING IT.

Q. RIGHT. IN OTHER WORDS, IT IS SOME TIME AFTER THE VOTE ON THE PANAMA CANAL. THE REASON I ASK THAT IS SOME OTHER SKEPTICAL REPORTER ASKED IF THIS HAS ANYTHING TO

DO WITH YOUR DELAYING THE STATEMENT UNTIL AFTER THE PANAMA CANAL VOTE. MR. GRANUM SAID THAT HE KNEW OF NO

LINKAGE. IS THAT YOUR POSITION?

A. MY POSITION IS THAT I'M GOING TO BE ISSUING THIS STATEMENT WHEN I ISSUE IT, BECAUSE WE HAVE A POSITION FULLY IN HAND TO OFFER WHICH IS A REFLECTION OF WHAT WE HAVE FOUND IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS.

Q. RIGHT. BUT, IN OTHER WORDS, ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE PANAMA CANAL VOTE?

A. LOOK, I AM NOT GOING TO SAY THAT THIS DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH ANY SERIES OF THINGS, ALL OF WHICH YOU COULD ASK ME ABOUT -- FOR INSTANCE, WHETHER OR NOT ALL OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS ARE IN NEW YORK, WHETHER THE PANAMA CANAL VOTE IS THERE -- ANYTHING. I'M TELLING YOU THAT WHEN I ISSUE THIS IT WILL BE BECAUSE I HAVE A FULL STATEMENT READY TO GO REPRESENTING ADMINISTRATION POLICY.

Q. I MEAN IS THERE ANY VALIDITY TO THE IDEA THAT THIS STATEMENT OF YOURS IS BEING HELD UP UNTIL THE CANAL VOTE IS OVER?
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 17 STATE 068561

A. I AM GIVING THE STATEMENT THIS AFTERNOON BECAUSE IT WILL BE AT THAT TIME, IN THE BEST JUDGMENT OF THOSE WHO ARE ACTUALLY WRITING THE STATEMENT, ONE WHICH IS FULL AND COMPLETE AND USEFUL; AND AS FAR AS WHATEVER CONSIDERATION GOES INTO THAT, I'M SIMPLY NOT IN ANY POSITION TO JUDGE.

Q. IS THE STATEMENT READY? HAS THE STATEMENT BEEN WRITTEN.

A. THERE HAVE BEEN MANY ANY NUMBER OF POSITIONS WRITTEN, WHICH WE HAVE --

Q. IN THE FINAL DRAFT.

A. NO. THERE WON'T BE A FINAL DRAFT. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE STATEMENTS AND THE IDEAS THAT I HAVE SEEN UP TILL NOW ARE NOT GOING TO BE WHAT'S ISSUED THIS AFTERNOON. THAT MUCH I CAN TELL YOU RIGHT NOW.

Q. SO IT'S NOT PREPARED YET.

A. WHAT IS GOING TO BE ISSUED THIS AFTERNOON HAS NOT BEEN PREPARED. THERE WILL BE ELEMENTS IN IT WHICH ARE ALREADY OBVIOUSLY FLOATING AROUND HERE.

Q. WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO SAY VERY SIMPLY

THAT IT IS NOT CONNECTED TO THE VOTE?

A. BECAUSE I'M NOT PREPARED TO SAY ANYTHING ABOUT WHAT THE REASONING IS THAT GOES INTO WHEN STATEMENTS ARE ISSUED. AND, QUITE FRANKLY, I WOULDN'T DO IT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE, NO MATTER WHAT THE QUESTION SAID.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 18 STATE 068561

IF YOU ASK ME IS IT BECAUSE WE HAVEN'T FINISHED CONSULTATIONS WITH SOMEBODY IN ISRAEL, I WOULDN'T ANSWER THE QUESTION.

Q. YOU'RE ENCOURAGING SPECULATION.

A. WELL, THEN I WILL HAVE TO ENCOURAGE IT. I'VE NOTICED THAT WITHOUT ENCOURAGING IT YOU SPECULATE. SO IF I'M ENCOURAGING IT YOU GO RIGHT AHEAD.

Q. BEFORE YOU GET OFF THE MIDDLE EAST, I HAVE TWO SIMPLE QUESTIONS. ONE, THERE IS A REGIONAL PEACE FUND SIGNED BY 27 SENATORS IN THE SENATE; AND IT'S BEEN UP THERE NOW FOR ABOUT SIX WEEKS AND THE ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT YET MADE A COMMENT ON IT. HAVE YOU ANYTHING ON THAT -- A REGIONAL PEACE FUND FOR THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. NO, BUT I'LL TAKE THE QUESTION.

Q. IT WAS SIGNED WITH 50 MILLION DOLLARS. THE OTHER THING IS THAT THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE HAS A MAP AND A STATEMENT FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WHOSE SUBJECT IS THE EGYPTIAN-SUDANESE BORDER AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE RAFIAH SALIENT QUESTION. THAT CAME UP I THINK EARLY LAST WEEK -- MONDAY, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. HAVE YOU ANYTHING ON THAT AS TO WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THE CHANGE OF TERRITORY BETWEEN EGYPT AND THE SUDAN WHICH, IN EFFEC,, IMPINGE ON EACH OTHER'S SOVEREIGNTY BUT THE SUDAN HAS CONTROL OVER AN AREA OF EGYPT AND EGYPT HAS CONTROL OVER AN AREA OF THE SUDAN? AND THIS HAS BEEN GOING ON NOW FOR ABOUT SOME 83 YEARS.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 19 STATE 068561

A. I'LL TELL YOU WHAT. I'LL RESEARCH THIS ONE.
VANCE

UNCLASSIFIED

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 sep 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION, PRESS SUMMARIES, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE068561
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/P:WBHARRIS:Y
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D780119-0686
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803126/baaafccs.tel
Line Count: 702
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0e6b5ebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 13
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3166453
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 16
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN
To: AMMAN BEIRUT MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0e6b5ebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014